

III. REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 8-13, 16-17 and 19 are pending in this application. By this amendment, claims 1, 9 and 17 have been amended. Claims 6, 7, 14, 15, 18, 20 and 21 have been canceled. Applicant does not acquiesce in the correctness of the rejections and reserves the right to present specific arguments regarding any rejected claims not specifically addressed. Further, Applicant reserves the right to pursue the full scope of the subject matter of the original claims in a subsequent patent application that claims priority to the instant application. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Entry of this Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. 1.116(b) because the Amendment: (a) places the application in condition for allowance as discussed below; (b) does not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration; and (c) places the application in better form for appeal. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request entry of this Amendment.

In the Office Action, claims 1-6, 8-14, 16 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Souza (U.S. Patent No. 4,000,578), hereafter "Souza." Claims 17 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Souza. Claims 7, 15 and 20 have been indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Applicants gratefully appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter.

The Office has objected to claims 7, 15 and 20 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but states that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 9 and 17 to include all of the limitations of claims 7, 15 and 20, respectfully, as well as any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicant asserts that the subject

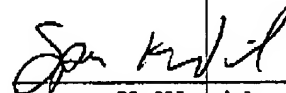
matter of amended claims 1, 9 and 17 and all dependent claims is allowable. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of the claims.

IV. CONCLUSION

In light of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that all claims are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner require anything further to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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